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Program Priorities for the 90's

**Reflections Paper
Audit Report
February, 1991**



THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE CITY OF HAMILTON



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To the Development Committee
of the Board of Education
for the City of Hamilton

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This Reflections Paper - **Program Priorities for the 90's** is presented to the Development Committee of the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton as part of the Program Department's Strategic Planning Process. Its development is the result of system-wide input and validation feedback from among the various school staff, stakeholder and constituent groups of this Board.

It is recommended that the strategic issues identified in this document form the basis of the strategic directions to be developed in the second stage of this project.

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton is a dynamic, urban system offering a wide and diverse range of programs for children and adults. It is recognized provincially as a quality educational system frequently contributing members of its staff to various Ministry of Education initiatives. Further, members of staff throughout the system are regular contributors to major conferences, workshops and seminars. In addition, the demand by other Boards for Hamilton produced curriculum materials is significant. This level of involvement reinforces Hamilton's image as a vibrant, effective, public school board.

Another characteristic of this Board is its strong commitment to special education. The diversity and quality of program in the area of special education is provincially recognized. Equally evident are the resources that have been applied to support services at the school level.

The mandate for compensatory education is well rooted in the value system of this Board; however, there is a strong sense that a reiteration of this Board's commitment in policy and resource allocation requires further articulation for both the elementary and secondary levels.

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Hamilton, as a city board, enjoys a productive relationship with the business community. This is evidenced through the Industrial Education Council, Co-operative Education programs, Partnerships in Education, Adult Basic Education and integrated training apprenticeship programs. Further, there is a very clear, ongoing working relationship with the post-secondary school institutions within the Hamilton area including Brock University, McMaster University, Mohawk College and O.I.S.E.(Niagara). This relationship involves teacher training, research and programs. In addition, the Board clearly benefits from the expertise and positive relationships with a number of community and service based organizations. The reciprocal support provided by these community agencies and our Board clearly serves the students and families of this community well.

MOVE TOWARD DECENTRALIZATION

As of spring, 1988, Hamilton began moving from a highly traditional, centralized system to a much more decentralized form of service delivery. The organizational framework is now decentralized; however, it would appear that the necessary infrastructure such as the cultural norms, values, budgeting, staffing and elements of the staff transfer process lag behind. As a result, there are very differing perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the decentralization process. The elementary panel sees itself as having benefited significantly from decentralization and the corresponding re-allocation of resources to the area teams. However, many secondary staff question the value of the decentralized model and feel strongly that an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization must be devised. Until there is a shift in the infrastructure as identified, there will continue to be significant dichotomies as to its overall effectiveness.

SITE -BASED MANAGEMENT

An extension of decentralization is the clear desire on the part of most teachers, school administrators and senior administration to move to a much more site-based management approach to school administration. This direction is not unique to Hamilton. It is a recognized provincial, national and even North American shift. However, the concept of site-based management requires definition and clarification. It is clear that the term has different meanings for different groups within the organization. Before any meaningful dialogue can occur surrounding the issues, it is critical that we establish a common set of assumptions. Further, there is considerable consensus on the part of principals, vice-principals, central office departments and senior administration that such a shift requires a planned, phased approach involving considerable in-service prior to full implementation. It is equally apparent that there is need for a balance between site-based decision-making and certain system-wide uniformity. This balanced approach, within clearly defined parameters, would allow Hamilton to move in the direction of site-based management while avoiding some of the pitfalls that some other systems have experienced in too rapid a shift.

PRIDE AND COMMITMENT

The strategic planning process has given clear indication that there is considerable pride on the part of teachers, support staff, school administrators, central office personnel and Senior Management for the system in which they work. There is a strong commitment to provide the best possible program for the young people in their charge. Further, it is apparent from input of the Home and School Association Executive and the Special Education Advisory Committee that there is considerable satisfaction from parents and interest groups.

NEED FOR RENEWAL

Nonetheless, this project has also clearly demonstrated the need for renewal. There are several issues which will have to be addressed if this Board is to maintain and extend its quality programming.

The task becomes even more formidable given the current economic times. It is clear that there is considerable apprehension among teachers, support staff and school administrators alike as to how renewal can be achieved in a period of significant budget restraint.

LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES

In undertaking this project there was a clear recognition that a number of provincial and local initiatives were underway. As such, the strategic plan must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate not only these initiatives but also the excellent work represented in the number of existing and ongoing reviews. Provincial initiatives would include: the Formative Years, the Transition Years, Specialization Years, Teacher Retraining, Drug Policy Review, Ontario Academic Credit Reviews, Technological Studies Renewal and the Early Years. Major local initiatives involve Component Staffing, Environmental Issues, Family Violence, Child Care, Aids Policy, French Immersion Review, Middle School Development, Race Relations, Substance Abuse and the Secondary School Study Report. Clearly all of these matters must be blended in order that the system can properly manage the various elements.

SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS

Societal expectations of educators are increasing, not diminishing. Ministry of Education mandates, Board initiatives and interest group requests continue to place additional demands and stress on the curriculum and the people who deliver it. Quite clearly, as a system, we must ask ourselves not only what we want to include in program delivery, but what in fact we are prepared to discontinue. The literature on effective schools clearly indicates that an organized form of reduction or abandonment is critical when introducing new initiatives. Otherwise educators will find themselves in a position where they will be expected to do not only more with less, but will simply be expected to do more --- period. Therefore, the health and well being of this organization is clearly dependent on its ability to establish key program priorities. Strategic planning provides a mandate for such direction.

THE CHALLENGE

The conflicting realities of the need for renewal and budget restraint could be seen as unmanageable. However, there would appear to be a clear sense emerging from the Audit Process of opportunity, not despair. There is a clear message that people are eager to work with the Board to plan for a future that encompasses the needs and interests of our child and adult clientele. However, there is also a clear message that the system can not be overloaded beyond either the capability of the staff to carry it, or of the community to fund it.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Program Department's Strategic Planning Process was undertaken in the Fall of 1990 **within the framework of the Board's nine strategic priorities (Appendix #1)**. Initially the document was framed within the parameters of a Special Education and Special Services Review. However, it quickly became apparent that it was not feasible to do the necessary level of analysis without looking at the broader program context. As a result, a proposal was presented to the Development Committee, through Senior Management, to undertake a strategic plan for program delivery within the

Hamilton system. This approach was endorsed by the Board in October, 1990.

The assumptions under which this project began provided focus for the data-gathering process.

- The program for the Hamilton Board of Education is built on the Image of the Learner as a self-directed problem solver. It is understood that all employees and students are "learners" in this context.
- We will need to look outward and learn from other organizations and school systems.
- We will continue to be held more accountable for all aspects of our work in education.
- We will continue to be asked to do more with less, both as a system, and as a society.
- We will need valid and reliable data about performance, service and outcomes at all levels.
- The need for more accountability and fiscal responsibility will require a setting of priorities.
- Program prioritization is essential. We must ask ourselves as a system not only what we need to put into the curriculum, but also what we should discontinue.

WORKING TEAMS

To direct the project, a **Core Design Team** was established in early October. This group meets regularly to oversee the operations of the various work groups responsible for the data-gathering process, preparation of the audit and the writing of final reports.

A **Focus Group** consisting of representatives of the Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association (elementary and secondary), federations and other system partners was established. It is the responsibility of this group to provide ongoing advice and direction to the Core Design Team. The **Focus**

Group has been an integral element of the undertaking, for without their direction and support this project would simply not have been possible.

DATA -GATHERING PROCESS

In order to gather the data from the various stakeholders and to encourage participation at the grass-roots level, each stakeholder group was asked to identify a representative to act as an explorer on its behalf. The explorers were trained in the data-gathering process to be used. They were then, in turn, responsible for their stakeholder submission to the Audit Team.

Each school was asked to contribute input in the same fashion as the stakeholder groups. As with the rest of the system, the schools were faced with extremely tight timelines. Given the demands in both elementary and secondary schools at the end of November and through early December, the project placed heavy demands on school personnel. It is for these reasons that the people most directly involved in the project are particularly appreciative of the hard work and attention exhibited in providing the necessary input.

By December 14th, over 130 reports were received. The majority of the submissions were of excellent quality, especially given the constraints under which they were prepared. Several additional submissions were received by December 21st. These were included in the second level audit analysis.

In addition to the system stakeholder groups, significant input was provided by the Home and School Association Executive and the Special Education Advisory Committee. Their contribution provided an important dimension to the audit process.

N.B. Appendix II

VALIDATION PROCESS

The purpose of the draft Audit Report was to provide an analytical summary of the input received from the stakeholders and constituent groups. This process was undertaken on the belief that strategic planning can only be effective if it provides the opportunity for initial input with an accompanying validation stage. It is only through this second level process that the issues of perspective and support can be addressed.

To this end each stakeholder group, school staff and constituent group was invited to review the document and provide reflective comments. This process occurred between January 7th and January 23rd and resulted in over one hundred and fifty submissions. In addition to the initial stakeholder groups, it was indeed encouraging to receive validation comments from subject associations, alternative education personnel, teacher groups, the Finance Department and other interested constituents. Subsequent to the validation process, the Audit Team was reconvened to provide a further audit. The revisions to the original **Draft Reflections Paper** resulted in this document.

Both at the input and validation stages, there was recognition of the opportunity for system-wide, grassroots input and discussion; however, there was considerable concern expressed related to the tight time lines. Given the high degree of congruency between the findings of the first and second audit, it is evident that despite the constraints of time, people responded with quality input.

1) STRENGTHS OF THE HAMILTON SYSTEM (See Appendix V - Question #1)

The audit revealed a consistent perception of strengths by virtually all participants. The degree of consistency among the various stakeholder groups and constituents is quite remarkable. Particularly encouraging is the high similarity between the system perceptions of itself and those strengths identified by both the Home and School Association and Special Education Advisory Committee. Although the responses were not always prioritized in

the same way, they did reveal a high degree of congruency. It is interesting to note that the importance of an item is directly related to the proximity of the learner.

Hamilton is acknowledged to be strong in the following:

- 1.1 **The quality of staff** is clearly seen to be the major strength of this system. Classroom teachers, area resource teams and learning resource staff are seen to be strengths by major stakeholder groups. Significant reference was made by a number of stakeholders to itinerant staff, teacher librarians, educational assistants, curriculum co-ordinators, department heads, psychological services, speech and language pathologists, social workers, adjustment consultants, caretakers, administrative staff and lunchroom supervisors. The roles of the principal and vice-principal were also identified as strengths. Not surprisingly, the support provided by secretarial staff was cited as an important service.
- 1.2 **The quality and diversity of program** are recognized as important strengths. Although certain programs were identified more than others, there was a clear sense that elementary and secondary classroom instruction, along with support programs, contributed significantly to the overall quality outcomes of this Board. Particular reference was made to computers, junior kindergarten, kit services and compensatory education.

These system perceptions of program strengths are strongly reinforced by the Home and School Association. The vast majority of the items cited were directly program related. This was also reflected clearly by the Special Education Advisory Committee through its references to the range of program availability and the leadership provided by the system in establishing specialized programs.

- 1.3 **Staff development** activities are cited as significant strengths at the system, area and school levels. Given the strong recognition of people

and program as system strengths, it is therefore not surprising that this area emerged as an important asset.

- 1.4 There were several other items acknowledged as program or support strengths in the system.

These include:

- Up to date equipment in certain settings
- Supplies
- Internal Mail Services.

2) **PRESENT AND FUTURE ISSUES/TRENDS** (See Appendix IV - Questions # 2 and 3)

It is interesting to note that virtually all of the stakeholder and constituent groups focused on issues as opposed to trends. Although this emphasis shifted somewhat in the future responses, what remained evident was that the emphasis and thinking were significantly centred on an issues focus. Certain issues and trends were mentioned repeatedly while others tended to be somewhat service specific.

- 2.1 The impact of **societal influences** is seen as significant in this school system. Changing family structures, marriage breakdown, health-related issues, family violence, student transience and poverty greatly affect student attendance, behaviour and the student's ability to learn. Further, the increased expectation of the school system as care giver adds further pressure to the already significant demands on educators and support personnel. As much as stakeholder groups are sensitive to the needs and interests of students and their families, there is a clear sense that the societal demands of the care giver role can too easily supplant teachers' primary role as educators.

- 2.2 **Difficult economic times and restraint** are seen to be major concerns that are affecting, and will continue to affect greatly the system's ability to deliver quality educational services. Areas of concern identified included: class size, new and replacement equipment, supplies, program diversity and professional support

service personnel. Compounding the economic issues is the fact that societal expectations and needs often increase in difficult economic times.

These elements, combined with the societal influences of 2.1, give further rationale to reiterate the interest in and commitment to Compensatory Education in policy and practice.

2.3 The integration of special needs students in the regular classroom is having a significant impact on the delivery of service at the classroom level. With the trend toward Human Rights issues and greater public awareness of and sensitivity to the participation of all into the mainstream of society, there will be an increasing need for modification of program to meet individual student requirements. The increased demand for staff in-service and support staff involvement in this area will be critical.

2.4 The effects of the information age and technology have a multi-faceted impact. First, there will be significant budget implications related to maintaining and acquiring an appropriate level of technology for use in the classroom as well as acquisitions for administrative /financial purposes, both at the school and system levels. The latter was a particular concern of secondary school personnel. Second, there will be the need for students to be sufficiently computer and technologically literate in order to allow them to be competitive in an ever changing society. And third, there will be an extremely high need for teacher in-service in order that staff can deal with the shifting technology, and in turn, teach students to deal with it effectively. The latter indicates a strong need for training and retraining.

2.5 The issue of overall staff in-service is also seen as critical. There will continue to be significant shifts not only in curriculum emphasis, but in the pedagogy and evaluation techniques used to deliver Program. Continued emphasis on whole language, active learning, student-centred learning, co-operative learning, student evaluation and independent study will require continued training and retraining of all

staff. Accentuating this need will be the impact of an aging teaching staff and the subsequent flow of many new teachers. As the existing experienced staff is lost, there will need to be a concerted effort placed on succession planning.

2.6 Present and future **immigration policies** of the Federal Government will have a significant impact on the demographic patterns of this city. The increasing multicultural nature of Hamilton's population will require major changes in both the nature of the program and how it is delivered. Again, this is seen as having a significant impact on program, accommodation and staff in-service. We are likely to experience not only an additional influx of students from other cultures, but also the additional stress on existing resources and modes of delivery that the complex needs of these students entail.

2.7 In addition, there are many other issues or trends which were identified:

- Environmental Issues
- Accountability
- Staff Stress at all levels
- Global Issues Education
- Changing School Year Pattern
- Community Use of Schools
- Need for School Support Services
- Increased Number of Adult Learners
- Stronger Links with the Post-Secondary Institutions and the Work Place
- Freedom of Information and Rights to Privacy Act

3) CONCERNS (See Appendix IV - Questions # 5, 6 & 7)

Concerns were identified by focusing on four broad areas: matters requiring improvement, needs not presently being addressed, opportunities not yet developed and those areas which, in a period of restraint, might be reduced or discontinued. Again there was considerable consistency across the stakeholder groups. Frequently, local school and classroom level concerns

surfaced in addition to system issues. Very clear clusterings emerged, and as a result, many of the isolated concerns have been captured under several broad areas. While these concerns are not presented in a strict priority order, they do provide, in relative terms, an indication of the strategic issues which must be addressed.

As strong and dynamic as this system is, there is clear evidence that there is need for assessment, review and renewal.

3.1 A sense of **overload** is pervasive throughout all levels of the organization. In a period of increasing expectations and diminishing resources, there is a strong sensitivity to not extending the system, and particularly its people, beyond capacity; personnel stress factors could result. While there are many persons who see the need to add new or extend existing programs and services, there exists a strong feeling of the need to consolidate. The organization must not only ask what it wants to add to the curriculum, but what it needs to remove. In so doing, however, consolidation must be a planned, collaborative process.

The volume of **paper flow** is a major element of this sense of overload. People feel that a concerted effort to reduce in this area is critical.

3.2 The implications of **reduced funding** in a period of restraint are creating considerable apprehension. People in this organization truly want to maintain and update the quality educational and administrative services offered. The need for efficiency and effectiveness are understood by the stakeholders; however, budget restraint cannot be implemented at the expense of quality programs. In addition, creative ways must be explored to seek alternate sources of funding.

3.3 The delivery of **relevant curriculum** is a high priority with all stakeholder and constituent groups. However, the concept of "relevant curriculum" varies among stakeholder groups and therefore must be defined before any consensus can result. There is a strong feeling that the curriculum must not only be relevant, however

defined, but also be highly **skill development oriented**. Skill development must, by definition be balanced and include not only the cognitive domain but also considerable emphasis on affective skills, life skills and psychomotor skills. There is a real concern that the curriculum must equip young people to live in a rapidly changing world.

- 3.4 Although stakeholder groups identified **special education** as a strength, it is an area which is seen to require major **refocusing** and an analysis of the existing mode of delivery. There is a clear recognition that although there are needs for additional services and personnel, there will be a need to analyze the existing deployment of resources. Although sectors within the organization identified certain specific areas for review, there is a strong sense that with the movement toward integration and mainstreaming, there is a need to provide teachers with assistance from psychoeducational services and area teams in modifying program for special needs students. In addition, there is a need to have curriculum materials that include strategies for the necessary modification of pedagogy and curriculum while maintaining the integrity of the program. This need is evident at all levels of the school system.

Despite the recognition of possible benefits of integration and mainstreaming, there is a clear sense that there remains the need for segregated contained classes for some students with highly specialized requirements. It is not a matter of one delivery mode or the other, but rather a matter of balance.

Other areas such as improved speech and language services, increased use of Learning Resource Teachers in program modification, improved testing procedures, improved D.A.R.T. and I.P.R.C. processes (reduction of waiting time for both), greater use of outside agencies, involvement of exceptional students in extra-curricular activities, co-op education for exceptional students, acquisition and maintenance of specialized equipment and age appropriate class placement were identified as needs.

- 3.5 In emphasizing the necessity of meeting the special education needs of certain students, there is a considerable concern that the needs of regular students will not be ignored.
- 3.6 There is a clear consensus for increased **accountability** within the system beginning with a definition of the term itself. Accountability includes the areas of program evaluation, assessment of student outcomes and personnel evaluation at all levels of the organization.
- 3.7 In relation to the issue of **decentralization**, there is a real need for the clarification of both roles and line responsibilities, and system and area responsibilities. This is particularly true related to program implementation. Both middle and secondary school teachers indicate a need for greater resource support from the area resource teams, and from subject specific personnel both at the area and system levels.
- 3.8 In identifying **site-based management** as a desirable direction educators emphasized that the term clearly needs to be defined. There is considerable concern regarding the lack of flexibility and control over budget, staffing, program implementation and resources. Any shift in increased flexibility must be accompanied by appropriate in-service plans. Further, there is a need to balance site-based decision making with a degree of system uniformity.
- 3.9 The **neighbourhood school** concept related to exceptional students and English as a Second Language Students is the preferred mode of delivery, especially among elementary school stakeholders. Coupled with this, there is a strong consensus that **transportation** costs of all kinds must be reduced, but in particular, those related to the transport of special education students across the system. However, the latter cannot be at the expense of student needs. We will always require certain specialized system-wide classes.

Secondary school personnel see the neighbourhood school concept as less critical, but support specialized programs offered in specific schools.

- 3.10 There is consensus that the existing delivery mode for **Gifted Education**, including resource allocation, requires careful examination and revision.
- 3.11 There is strong concern expressed by all respondents of the need to **improve communication**, both within the system itself, with parents and with outside groups, organizations and associations. It is critical that better communication be developed between the educational system and the populace at large. This is particularly true at a time of fiscal restraint. There is a need for the Board to make the larger constituency aware through "jargon-free" communication of the quality educational services offered.

There is also a need to improve the communication across panels (elementary/secondary) and among schools and departments.

- 3.12 **Cross-disciplinary curriculum** should be encouraged where applicable. This is of particular interest among middle school teachers, administrators and resource staff. Caution must be used, however, in order to maintain subject integrity, particularly at the senior level.
- 3.13 Staff development is seen as requiring a better balance between the two separate concepts of **staff development** and **leadership development**. There is a need to increase the emphasis on individual professional growth related to the development and delivery of program. The opportunity for personal professional growth is seen as a major need by all stakeholders. This is certainly reinforced by both the Special Education Advisory Committee and the Home and School Association in terms of the need for experienced, well trained and qualified teachers.
- 3.14 The present model of delivery, reception, orientation and level of resources for **English as a Second Language/English as a Second Dialect** are seen as requiring review. This was supported at all levels.

3.15 Teachers, administrators and professional support staff see themselves as having high in-service needs related to

- Pedagogy
- Awareness and use of technology
- Modification of program for special needs students
- Behavioural needs students
- Change process
- Increasingly complex social needs of students.

Middle school and secondary school teachers expressed a strong desire for in-service related to the transition years and destreaming.

3.16 There is significant need for an increase in the support for children experiencing **behaviour problems**. In addition, in-service for all staff, and support at the classroom level is seen as critical. These needs are evident both at the elementary and secondary levels.

3.17 A review of the existing levels of funding for the following is suggested:

- A universal lunchroom program
- Snack programs for Junior Kindergarten
- French Immersion
- Adult General Interest Courses
- Extra-curricular activities such as skating, swimming, football and hockey
- Textbook appropriation
- Consumable supplies
- Food/meals for various functions
- Junior Kindergarten.

3.18 Other identified areas requiring review included:

- Adult Education programs
- Central purchasing
- The feasibility of amalgamating the three school boards
- Values Education
- Night School Credit Courses
- Summer School Credit Courses
- The need to continue to find ways of streamlining the organization.

4) SYSTEM PRIORITIES (See Appendix IV - Question #4)

In a board of education as diverse as Hamilton, it might be expected that it would be difficult to obtain consensus as to the highest priorities; however, quite the opposite is true. Five distinct areas emerge along with several other significant items. Priorities include:

4.1 SUPPORT STAFF emerges as the clearest "must have" at the school level. In-school support priorities include Learning Resource Teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers and Educational Assistants. In the services/counselling area, Adjustment Consultants, Psychoeducational Services, Speech and Language Pathologists, Social Workers and Guidance Counsellors are considered to be important. The elementary schools clearly indicated that all elementary schools should have a principal and vice-principal where numbers or programs warrant. At both the elementary and secondary levels, in-school administrators should be people with a strong background in program, instruction and management skills.

Elementary teachers and administrators also expressed strong need for itinerant teachers, lunchroom supervisors, staff trained in computer technology, computer technicians, qualified teacher librarians and full time secretaries. There is a strong need at the elementary level for area resource teams that can serve both curriculum and special education requirements.

Both elementary and secondary teachers, and administrators strongly supported the role of the subject co-ordinator; however, there is a clear need for these people to have more of a consultative role as part of their mandate; i.e., availability in schools on a consultative basis.

4.2 STAFF DEVELOPMENT was also a clear priority throughout the system. It is worthy of note that teachers, administrators and professional staff saw the need for in-service at two levels: the system and area level as well as the school implementation level. A system/area staff development program, designed for both teachers and administrators

is seen as essential in increasing awareness, knowledge and skills related to program implementation, current teaching methodologies, modification of program and pedagogy for special needs students.

This system/area level of in-service would require a long range plan emphasizing the overall effectiveness of curriculum implementation, student assessment and program accountability.

The second element of in-service is required at the school level. Principals and teachers see it as critical that each school have a plan or implementation model as well as the necessary time and resources to implement it. The availability of occasional teachers is a critical element in this resource. Without strong leadership and support for principals and teachers in this process, implementation will continue to lag behind the development stage.

The school/classroom implementation will require program leadership by the principal, through peer coaching, material resources and sufficient release time for teachers. Successful implementation has very clear implications related to the availability of occasional teachers at both the elementary and secondary level, and the need for restructuring the existing responsibilities and time allowances for secondary school department heads.

4.3 Planned renewal of the physical facilities and the upgrading of equipment are seen to be a high priorities throughout the system. In each school a fundamental priority must be the well being and safety of the occupants --- students and staff alike. This can only be achieved by a planned ongoing maintenance program.

In order to meet the demand of a rapid technological evolution in the expanding global economy, there must be recognition of the need for new and/or upgraded equipment. This particularly applies to the areas of computers, kit services and media services. These technological priorities are seen as being important not only at the secondary level, but at the primary/junior level as well.

- 4.4 A movement toward **school-based management** was clearly reflected through all constituent groups. It is critical that school administrators and their staff have control over staffing, program implementation and resources. In order to accommodate the uniqueness of each school and its student and community needs, it is strongly felt that the resources and the decision-making processes should rest as much as possible at the school level. It is interesting to note that principals and teachers not only expressed a desire for increased responsibility, but also understood the accountability factors involved.

As noted earlier, there is a need for definition and role responsibilities if site-based management is to be effective. Further, a planned implementation involving time, support and in-service training for teachers and administrators is critical for success.

- 4.5 System stakeholders expressed a clear perception that, as an educational system, Hamilton does not do an effective job of **marketing** itself in terms of its educational goals, philosophy, program strengths and support systems. In periods of difficult economic times and corresponding restraint, it is seen as critical that all elements of this organization explore every opportunity to communicate to the community its strengths as well as its needs. This must be system as well as school commitment.

The commitment is seen as a joint responsibility involving not only school personnel and senior administrators, but also the trustees. There were clear indications that system personnel would like trustees to be aware of school needs and to be visible in the schools in order to increase awareness and effective communication. It was felt that this would not only result in a more open relationship between staff and trustees, but would further improve our collective ability to portray a more positive image to the community at large.

- 4.6 Although these items are not presented in strict priority order, they do reflect, in relative terms, a high degree of consensus.

- Small class sizes

- Early recruitment of the best teachers available
- Compensatory Education
- Commitment to the new middle school directions
- Fiscal responsibility throughout the system
- Parent and community involvement
- Facilities for special needs youngsters
- Strong commitment to literacy
- Personnel evaluation congruent with accountability
- Alternative programs.

5) IMAGING THE SYSTEM IN THE YEAR 2000 (See Appendix IV - Question #8)

What should the Hamilton System look like in the year 2000? The purpose in posing this question was to provide a perspective on three areas: the degree of consensus or nonconsensus surrounding the Board's stated Mission and Vision statements; an assessment as to whether the concepts of "Image of the Learner" (see appendix 5) and the "Image of the Ideal Teacher" (see appendix 6) are seen as rooted in the thinking and attitude of the system; a comparison of the descriptors used that act as a very worthwhile cross check for the Audit Team in its analysis of all other areas. It is indeed encouraging to note that all three areas were reinforced in the findings of the Audit Team.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Hamilton Board of Education's purpose is to educate children and adults to enable them to enjoy life as creative, contributing, responsible members of society.

VISION

"Learning is most important to success in life."

The vision of the Hamilton Board is to have a student-centred and school-based educational system which advocates and values a caring attitude, respect for diversity, accountability, innovation, trust and openness in communication, and challenges students to continued achievement.

This direction represents a refocusing on the students in the classroom.

Support and development of this vision will provide Hamilton students with the capabilities to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

In general, the Board of the Education for the City of Hamilton should continue to strive to create a learning environment and work place which are humane, responsive, highly accountable, innovative, creative and flexible.

Its values and practices need to reflect caring, warmth, sensitivity, creativity and an orientation to success. In addition, it needs to function in an environmentally sensitive, responsible and responsive manner.

It should continue to employ highly qualified and dedicated staff who understand and espouse the values of the mission and vision statements, and who are empowered, using a collaborative team approach, to address the needs of the young people and adults they serve.

Programs should reflect a holistic, student-centred, integrated and interdisciplinary approach to education with strong emphasis on problem solving and thinking skills. In turn, the curriculum should be relevant, reflective of the values of the vision and mission statement as well as the multicultural and pluralistic needs of this community. Given the increased awareness to those in our society with special needs, it should be an organization which is sensitive and responsive to the learning and accessibility needs of all of its students and employees alike.

It should have an active and responsive relationship with the community which embodies open, honest communication and an understanding of parents as partners in education. It should have positive working relationships with community groups such as Business, Labour, Social Service Agencies and Post-Secondary School Institutions. In addition to the need for positive external communication, the system should reflect a high commitment to positive, open and direct communication within the organization itself. This would include all elements: elementary and

secondary (seamless education for children), departments and groups within the organization, and the educational and political elements of the system.

In essence, this must be a student-oriented, program-driven educational system.

6) THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ISSUES

As a result of analyzing the input, the Audit Team have identified several strategic issues for consideration by the Directions Planning Team. Although many of the issues are interrelated, they nonetheless are sufficiently identifiable to be expressed as unique themes.

6.1 Planning related to program delivery and the various support services is required at all levels of the organization in order to reduce the sense of overload and stress throughout the system. Priority planning must be associated with the following:

- Strong inservice support
- Teacher Retraining
- Early Years
- Child Care
- Formative Years
- Transition Years
- Middle School Development
- Specialization Years
- Technological Studies Renewal
- Secondary School Study
- Ontario Academic Credit Reviews
- French Immersion Review
- Environmental Issues
- Race Relations
- Family Violence
- Drug Review
- Aids Policy
- Substance Abuse
- Component Staffing

6.2 Program delivery issues related to centralization and decentralization need clarification.

- Role definitions for all resource/support staff (Central and Areas)
- Line responsibilities (Who reports to whom?)
- Responsibility of resource allocation (amount of resources to be assigned)
- Responsibility of resource deployment (How are resources are to be used?)
- Finance issues (flexibility, responsibility, accountability)

6.3 Further planning and in-service are required in order to facilitate the system's desired shift toward site-based management.

- Decision-making authority
- In-service training for principals, vice-principals and teachers
- An in-school implementation model based on the Board's C.R.D.I. process
- Resource redistribution
- Staffing/hiring
- Financial flexibility

6.4 An analysis of the existing mode of delivery for special education is needed.

- Neighbourhood school concept
- Transportation of special education students
- Integrated classes/segregated classes/mainstreaming
(System policies based on clear definitions)
- Gifted education
- I.P.R.C. process/expectations
- D.A.R.T. process/expectations
- System/Area programs
- Expectations related to the D.A.R.T. process
- Vocational Schools

6.5 There is a need to have closer ties in the development and implementation processes.

- Inservice related to implementation
- Relationships between co-ordinators and area resource teams
- Role of professional support staff in curriculum development and implementation
- Implementation support at the middle and secondary school levels from area teams

- 6.6 Given the need for integrated support services at the school level, it is essential that a review be undertaken related to the existing mode of delivery and interaction among
- Adjustment services
 - Guidance Services
 - Health Services
 - Learning Resource Teachers
 - Outside agencies
 - Psychoeducational Services
 - Social work
 - Speech and Language Pathologists.
- 6.7 There is a need to develop a definition and model for program accountability.
- System level responsibilities
 - Area level responsibilities
 - School level responsibilities
 - Assessment of student outcomes
- 6.8 A review of our existing multicultural education programs and E.S.L./E.S.D. delivery models for elementary and secondary schools, and adult learners is required.
- 6.9 An analysis of the role of staff development related to program implementation is needed.
- Relationship between the Staff Development and Program Departments
 - Differentiation between staff development and leadership development
 - Enhancing staff morale
 - Degree and types of in-service related to renewal
 - Training/retraining of principals and vice-principals related to the role of the instructional leaders in the 90's and the twenty-first century
 - Dealing with current pedagogical priorities
 - In-service related to site-based management

6.10 A comprehensive plan related to all aspects of Adult and Continuing Education is required.

- Adult Education
- Adult Learning Centres
- Correspondence
- Alternative Education
- Adult Basic Education
- Adult English Second Language
- Summer School
- Night School
- Relationships to Day School Programs (i.e. curriculum support, consistency, credit requirements)

6.11 It is important to recognize and reinforce the knowledge of child development theory as it applies to Middle School practice.

- Supporting the work of the middle school committee
- Direct involvement in the Transition Years

6.12 There is a need to implement a personnel evaluation process.

- Constructive feed back to staff
- Plan for individual growth and development
- Accountability at all levels

6.13 There is a need to develop a program-based communications and public relations plan at all levels of the organization which allows for recognition of the excellence in our system.

8) FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Following the presentation of the revised **Reflections Paper** to the Development Committee of the Board on February 7th will be an opportunity for Trustees to assess the patterns of information and the strategic issues as presented in the **Reflections Paper**. In turn, they will be asked to provide further directions to the Strategic Planning Core Design Team.

Following the Trustee review on February 7th, a Directions Paper Advisory Committee will be established in mid to late February. The team will consist of Trustee representatives, members of senior administration and representatives from the various levels within the system. This group will provide a focus for a writing team which will prepare a draft directions paper. It will be vetted by principal/vice-principal associations, federations, the Home and School Association, the Special Education Advisory Committee and other associations within the organization. Following that process, a revised **Directions Paper** will be presented to the Development Committee through Senior Management.

It is intended that the **Directions Paper** be very specific.

Recommendations, both short and long term, will be made and specific action teams related to specific strategic issues will be identified. Wherever possible, these action teams will include appropriate personnel at various levels within the organization, particular groups with specific expertise, trustees and community representatives.

9) CONCLUSION

It is the responsibility of the Board to set strategic goals for this system. These goals, however, can only be fully achieved when there exists a strong consensus, involvement, ownership and commitment on the part of the educators and support staff. The further development and implementation of this strategic planning process must therefore be a joint, on-going venture. It is through such a joint process that true accountability to our students, colleagues and community will be achieved.

SUMMARY OF 1990 MAJOR ISSUES

Appendix I

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES: The Board is faced with the continuing decline of financial support and increasing program expectations from the Provincial government. In such an environment, it is imperative to develop strategies and gain commitment from trustees, officials and all Board employees with respect to the better utilization of all our human, financial and physical resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: Matters and issues of the environment have impacted all of us. In our schools, students at all levels are showing a keen interest in learning about and taking responsibility for the environment. At a corporate level, a number of environmental initiatives are taking place in the Board. Policies and procedures must be developed for both the curricular and operational aspects of this issue.

FRENCH IMMERSION: When the program began in 1975, there was not a clear statement of direction for French Immersion as a City-Wide program. As a result, decisions have been made to solve individual problems and past practice has become procedure. It is one of the priorities of Senior Management, as stated at the December 1989 Development Committee, to have a clearly stated philosophy, a set of well understood policies and procedures and a long range plan for the French Immersion Program.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ROLES: This item involves a clarification of roles resulting from our changing organizational structure. It also addresses the coordination of area and school plans as well as central department thrusts.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SERVICES: Special Education and Special Services, as an integral part of our program department, will provide an integrated and supportive role relative to the Board's mission and vision statements. The vehicle to accomplish this will take the form of a review of a number of our present special programs. This review will be a component of an overall program review being planned.

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDY AND

COMPONENT STAFFING: The Secondary School Study was established to review the delivery of secondary education in the light of new directions resulting from a change in provincial government. The study has focussed on five areas: Futures; Program Initiatives; Staff Growth and Development Effective Program Delivery; and accountability Component Staffing is a staffing model which being negotiated between the Board and O.S.S.T.F. While Component Staffing is a separate issue from the Secondary School Study. It will have significant influence on how program is delivered.

INTEGRATED INFORMATION SYSTEMS: New automated systems must be developed to provide the board with accurate, timely and usable information. Computer systems must meet the organization's every-growing need for ready access to reliable information on employees, finance students, etc. As such we must develop and update effective information systems that are critical to decision-making, planning and program delivery.

RACE RELATIONS: The board must develop a strategic plan to design programs, but commitment and gain community support for draft Race Relations policy. The goal is to work towards achieving an education environment which promotes tolerance and respect for all racial, ethnic, cultural and religious plurality.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: This organization is in need of improved methods for viewing this, it is proposed that a process will be negotiated which proves details to be used by staff throughout the organization.

Appendix II

AUDIT TEAM

Ken Bain
Steve Barrs
Jean-Guy Belanger
Judith Bell
Judi Binns
Gary Birchall
Bill Brown
Jackie Carson
Iris Chatten
Steve Coombs
Eto Corcione
Jim Cunningham
Tim Dexter
Terry Ducarme
George Fawcett
Bill Ferris
Lesley Fraser
Gary Gibson
Ralf Gmell
Kathie Hibbins
Bruce Hosking
Elias Ibrahim
Ray Irvine
Ken Jackett
Owen Jackson
Beth Jazvac
Barbara Jepson
Jim Mackrory
Susan Mawson
Dave McIsaac
Jackie Norris
Jack Packer
Donna Quigley
Carol Ramberan
John Ramoutar
Erin-Blythe Reddie
Vic Riman
Dave Rogers
Avanell Scherer
Liz Shuttleworth
Jon Sims
Paul Smith
Stew Thompson
Leann Yarwood

Lincoln M. Alexander E.S.
Education Centre
G. P. Vanier S.S.
Human Resources
Sir John A. Macdonald S.S.
Program
Program
Sir Allan MacNab S.S.
Crestwood S.S.
Hill Park S.S.
Lincoln Alexander E.S.
Westdale S.S.
Westview M. S.
Scott Park S.S.
Sherwood S.S.
Director's Office
Glendale S.S.
Program Dept.
Sir Allan MacNab S.S.
Sir Winston Churchill S.S.
Program Dept.
G. P. Vanier S.S.
Area 4 Office
Ainslie Wood S.S.
Information Management Services
Westmount S.S.
Sir Wilfred Laurier
Burkholder M.S.
Human Resources
Delta S.S.
Hill Park S.S.
Barton S.S.
Area 2 Office
Area 4/5 Office
Caledon S.S.
Comley E.S.
Parkview S.S.
Program Dept.
Sir John A. Macdonald S.S.
Delta S.S.
Glendale S.S.
Area 5 Office
Program Department
Sherwood S.S.

Appendix II

FOCUS GROUP

Bob Adams	Special Education
Gillian Anchel	P.S.S.P.
Marie Bountrogianni	Psychological Services
Ann Cook-Petz	O.S.S.T.F.
Jim Douglas	O.S.S.T.F.
Ron Halmos	H.S.S.P.C.
John Henry	Curriculum
Ray Irvine	Area Supervisors
Bob Leedale	Continuing Education
Trish Nanayakkara	H.T.F. (H.W.T.A.)
Nancy Nicholls	S.O.S.
Ted Ophoven	H.P.A.
Diane Rawsthorn	Curriculum
Don Rothwell	S.O.S.
Marg Schneider	H.P.A.
Paul Shewfelt	Finance
Bryan Schofield	Adjustment
Bruce Sinclair	H.R.
Dave Didur	Curriculum
Don Thorne	H.S.S.P.C.
Rein Ende	H.T.F.(O.P.S.T.F.)

SECRETARIAL SUPPORT TEAM

Helene Arthur	Alcadia Fairman
Patricia G. Binkley	Doris Thomsen-Griffin
Gayle deJager	Katherine Harrow

DOCUMENT EDITOR

Gwen Mowbray
Coordinator of English

Appendix II

CORE DESIGN TEAM

Darrel Skidmore
Gail Rappolt
Jim McCaughey
Bruce Mair

Superintendent of Program
Assistant Superintendent of Program
Program Leader, Staff Development
Area 5 Supervisor

EXPLORERS

Gail Belisario
Marg Bowman
Diane Cole
Eileen Collins
Andy Cranbury
Wayne Dalgleish
John Forbeck
Dave Gallagher
Gayle Glenney-Burke
Gary Goodale
Eric Hipkiss
Lee Hondronicols
Barbara Howard
Diane Husack
Barbara Jepson
Brad Kuhn
Ted Lowrey
Bill Manson
Anne McNeil
Phil Morgan
Joan Morse
Paul Murphy
Joanne Preston
Anne Puusepp
Erin-Blythe Reddie
Jim Reid
Marlene Rielly
Pat Squire
Lauren Tindall
Doug Trimble

Pr./Jr. Consultant
H.S.S.P.C.
Area 2 Pr./Jr. Principals
Area 4 Pr. Jr.
Area 4 Middle School
Adjustment
Area 5 Vice-Principals
Area 5 Middle School
Social Workers
Area 2 Pr./Jr.
Special Education Consultants
Primary Ass'n
Area Superintendents
Area 4/5 Office
Area 3 Vice-Principals
Area 2 Middle School
H.S.S.P.C.
Curriculum Department
Kindergarten Ass'n
Area 1 Vice-Principals
H.S.S.P.C.
H.S.S.P.C.
Section 27 (Brian Seamans)
Area 5 Pr./Jr.
Area 4 Vice-Principals
Area 1 Middle School
Area 5
Psychological Services
Area 2 Vice-Principals
Area 3 Pr./Jr.

ASSUMPTIONS

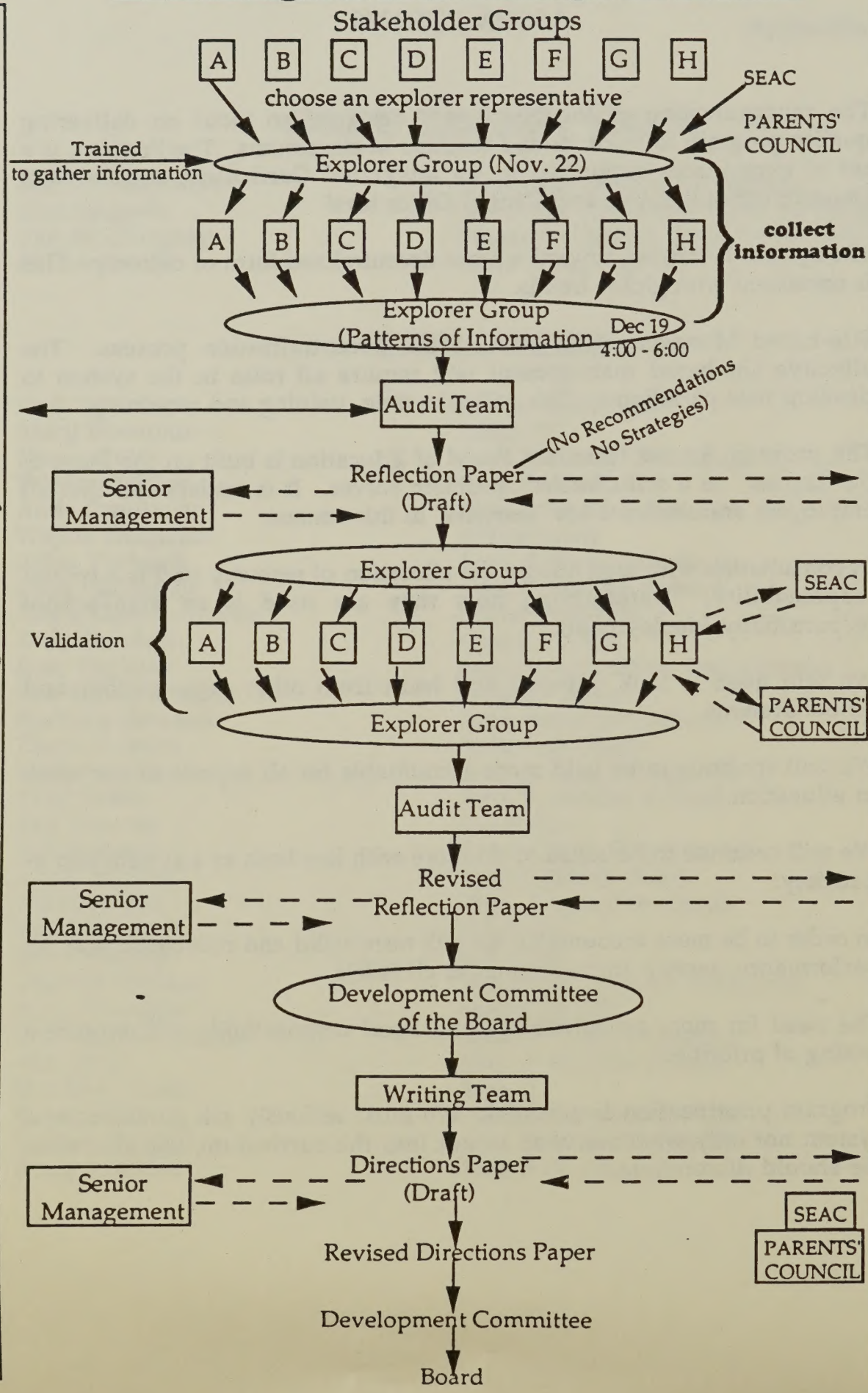
- The reorganization of the board was designed to focus on delivering quality program to students and teachers in classrooms. The Program is a set of experiences supported by an integrated Curriculum and Services Department at the Area and Central Office level
- The system is moving toward a more decentralized form of delivery. This is consistent with global trends.
- Site-based Management is part of the decentralization process. The effective site-based management will require all roles in the system to develop new paradigms. This will take time, training and retraining.
- The program for the Hamilton Board of Education is built on the *Image of the Learner* as a self-directed problem solver. It is understood that all employees and students are "learners" in this context.
- In consultation with area offices, the allocation of resource staff is a central responsibility. Determining how they are used is an area/school responsibility (deployment).
- We will need to look outward and learn from other organizations and school systems.
- We will continue to be held more accountable for all aspects of our work in education.
- We will continue to be asked to do more with less both as a system and as a society.
- In order to be more accountable we will need valid and reliable data about performance, service and outcomes at all levels.
- The need for more accountability and fiscal responsibility will require a setting of priorities.
- Program prioritization is essential. We must seriously ask ourselves as a system not only what we need to put into the curriculum, but also what we should discontinue.

PROGRAM DEPARTMENT Strategic Planning Process

Core Design Team - Design & Carry Out Process

Focus Groups - advisory, reaction, counsel

Date
Nov
Dec
Jan
Feb
March



Program Priorities For The 90's

Within the context of the Board's mission and vision statements and our image of the learner, provide input related to the following:

1. Identify the key strengths within the Hamilton Board of Education which we must continue to reinforce and maximize. This helps us ensure that positive and productive features of the system are part of our planning.
2. In priority order, list current issues which are affecting program delivery in our system.
3. In priority, identify the key issues/trends which will affect program in this system by 1995-2000.

Given the information in your responses above, answer # 4 - 7.

4. In priority, identify the "must haves" in our system.
5. a) Identify the areas of program delivery (curriculum/services) which could be improved.
b) How might these improvements be accomplished?
6. a) Identify needs or opportunities which are not presently being addressed.
b) How might we go about addressing them?
7. a) Given the present period of restraint, identify in priority those areas that we may be able to discontinue.
b) What are the implications for the classroom /system if these areas are deleted?

Provide some creative ideas.

8. Using a brief list of descriptive words or phrases, describe what you would like the Hamilton school system to be like by the year 2000.
9. Please add any additional comments which you feel would be helpful.

THE IMAGE OF THE LEARNER

Appendix VI

- * The Ministry views the learner as an active participant in education who gains satisfaction from dynamics of learning.
- * The concept of the learner as a mere processor of information has been replaced by the image of a self-motivated, self-directed problem-solver, aware of both the processes and uses of learning and deriving a sense of self-worth and confidence from a variety of accomplishments.
- * This learner is guided by values consistent with personal religious-ethical beliefs, cultural traditions, and the common welfare of society.
- * The image also reveals a methodical thinker who is capable of inquiry, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, as well as a perceptive discoverer capable of resourcefulness, intuition and creativity.
- * Lest it be thought that this image of the learner is too idealistic or valid only for students in advanced stages of cognitive development, it should be noted that in the educational system of this province even young children and older ones with learning disabilities are perceived as moving toward this image; in other words, it applies to all learners potentially.
- * The image of the learner held by the Ministry relies as much on the process as the content of learning because it is through the process that young people become lifelong learners who have, as C.P. Snow says, "the future in their bones" as well as the past in their heads. The inquiring mind and the contemplative spirit can carry them into the uncertain and possibly threatening future with confidence, resourcefulness, and integrity.

3.2 Affective Priorities (Attitudes, Values, Beliefs, Behaviours)

The teacher will:

- believe in the importance of teaching.
- love and respect young people, and exhibit sincerity, caring, understanding and empathy in nurturing them.
- believe that all young people can learn, grow, and develop.
- be a learning role-model: a life-long learner who is a self-motivated, self-directed problem-solver.
- be motivated, curious, and energetic.
- be future-looking, flexible, and resilient.
- exhibit patience and a sense of humour.
- be consistent and stable, exhibiting fairness, integrity, and self control.
- be a personal role-model: a personal example in hygiene, dress, deportment, values, behaviour.
- exhibit respect for the personal heritage of each student.
- be an active, involved professional, reflecting professional autonomy as well as professional and public accountability.
- enjoy teaching.

3.3 Skills Priorities

The teacher will:

- possess effective interpersonal and team-building skills.
- be a motivator.
- be able to communicate clearly and effectively, using a variety of media and in a variety of roles: coach, collaborator, counsellor, delegator, evaluator, mediator, mentor, moderator, negotiator, networker, nurturer, and teacher.
- be an active listener.
- be resourceful, innovative and creative, being able to use and teach high-level thinking skills, and problem-solving and decision-making techniques.
- use a variety of teaching strategies and techniques.
- exhibit leadership skills (as well as managerial skills).
- possess the skills to effectively evaluate student growth and development, self-growth and development, and curriculum effectiveness.
- be able to retrieve, interpret, evaluate and use information.
- be able to use technological developments and to integrate them into the current curriculum.
- be able to apply current educational research to the curriculum and the classroom.
- possess the skills to deal with change: to adjust, to adapt, and to grow.
- be able to plan and organize.
- provide a safe and secure learning environment which fosters personal growth and development, positive self-concepts and intellectual freedom.
- be skilled and proficient in the subject(s) being taught.

3.4 Knowledge Priorities

The teacher will:

- possess a broad academic base, involving a general knowledge in a variety of subjects and a specialized knowledge in a few. In subjects directly related to the world of work, the teacher must have up-to-date field experience.
- understand human growth and development theory.
- understand the nature of the learning process and styles of learning.
- know a variety of teaching techniques and strategies.
- be aware of, and sensitive to, the global and educational communities, their influences on society, and the resources they provide.
- understand change theory and its implications for both the curriculum and self-growth.
- understand the role of education and the teacher in society as defined by the society.
- be aware of, and sensitive to, Canadian and personal cultural heritage.

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